

**1060 Main Street Elderly Housing**

Project Narrative  
Site Plan Modification & Special Exception  
1060 Main Street  
South Windsor, Connecticut  
DPI Project No. 4512  
June 1, 2021

**Project Overview**

On behalf of the co-applicants, 1060 Main, LLC (an affiliate of Up Realty, LLC) and the South Windsor Housing Authority, we are submitting this brief project narrative describing the proposed work and demonstrating compliance with the special exception criteria for the above-referenced new elderly housing development.

In the Fall of 2020, 1060 Main, LLC purchased the former South Windsor Rehabilitation and Nursing Center and Paradigm Healthcare Center of South Windsor located at 1060 Main Street to renovate the existing building and parking lot, with interior and exterior building and site modifications, to utilize as market rate elderly housing apartments. They are seeking a Special Exception for "Elderly Housing" in the A-40 Residential zoning district (Table 3.1.1A) in compliance with Special Regulations Section 7.7, and a Site Plan Modification for the improvements shown on the enclosed plans.

Up Realty, LLC, operating on the subject site as 1060 Main, LLC, is a New York-based company that specializes in the adaptive reuse of abandoned nursing home facilities into elderly housing, as is currently proposed. With a local East Hartford office, the applicant is expanding its development reach out of New York and into Connecticut to provide amenity-rich, market rate 62-and-over apartments through their consistent reuse of existing structures to meet a growing demand for independent elderly living facilities in various communities. The primary objective of Up Realty's development work is to maintain as much of the existing site and building as possible to limit disturbance to surrounding neighbors and uses, while preserving the existing character with which communities are familiar.

A key feature of this application is the co-applicant status with the Housing Authority of South Windsor to increase and improve the amount of elderly housing dwelling units available to Town residents, and as required by Section 7.7.2 of the South Windsor Zoning Regulations. Prior to submission, the Housing Authority met with the applicant's design and entitlements team to review the proposal and subsequently approved co-application with 1060 Main, LLC, given the 62 years of age and over requirement. The agreement between these two entities will allow the proposed facility to be owned and operated by a private, proprietary organization while promoting the goals and objectives of the Housing Authority.

## **Proposed Building and Site Elements**

The site currently contains an approximately 31,495 SF one-story building that is vacant and under-utilized. During its previous uses, the building was served by 60 parking spaces, including 5 handicap-accessible spaces, and associated sidewalks and aboveground and underground utilities. The proposed development aims to preserve the majority of the existing good quality, compliant, and accessible site features while introducing new amenities and access throughout the site.

The building interior will see the most drastic changes in this development to accommodate a total of 37 apartments, split between 21 one-bedroom and 16 two-bedroom units. An existing corridor currently runs through the middle of the building but will be removed to allow each of the 37 units to have their own entry door on the outside of the building. Where there is not already room on the façade for a new door into the unit, an existing window will be converted into a door. Aside from the replacement of some degraded exterior building finishes and materials, the introduction of new doors will be the primary exterior building improvement.

A range of unit sizes and amenities are available for both the one- and two-bedroom options. The one-bedroom units range from 569 SF to 799 SF, each with one bathroom, and the two-bedroom units range from 870 SF to 1,201 SF, nine of which have two bathrooms and six of which have an additional office/den space. Walk-in showers will be available as well as in-unit washers and dryers and high-end kitchen finishes. The dwelling units will have operable air conditioning and heating through heat pumps and exterior condenser units. Baseboard heating may also be available should residents wish to have additional heat sources in the winter. The entire building will continue to be served by a fire sprinkler system, much of which already exists in the structure.

Various building-related shared amenities will also be provided on site. A community room is being proposed in the southwest building corner with two bathrooms and a small kitchen to host small gatherings for the residents and their guests. This room is accessible from two sides of the building to promote ample access for both residents and any deliveries that may be brought to the facility for events. Also, currently existing on site is a courtyard in the interior of the building. This space contains walkways and mature shade trees that will be protected and preserved during construction. This courtyard will be directly accessible by 24 of the apartment units. Two corridors are being proposed off the courtyard to allow access by the remaining residents, as well as access for maintenance and emergency egress.

Site improvements are also introduced to the existing parking lot and circulation to accommodate the new use. The existing pavement will be expanded to create a 24'-wide circumferential drive around the entirety of the building. The addition of this drive promotes the even distribution of new parking spaces on all four sides of the building. Final site conditions will see an increase of parking from 60 spaces to 78, including 8 evenly-distributed handicap-accessible spaces (only 4 are required). Of these 78 spaces, there is at least one space per dwelling unit entrance on each of the building faces. Each of these parking spaces is also associated with an existing or proposed concrete sidewalk to bring each resident directly to their door as well as around the building without interruption or obstacle. The existing 8 parking spaces along the access drive will be removed to increase the safety of pedestrians on site and in consideration of the immediate neighbor.

Another new feature of this site is the inclusion of Electric Vehicle Ready and Installed parking spaces per Section 6.4.10 of the South Windsor Zoning Regulations. Based on the total number of parking spaces for this development, 3 spaces are required to include installed charging stations for electric vehicles. Of these 3 spaces, one is designed as van-accessible without being restricted to handicap-accessible use and the other two will be standard 9'x18' parking spaces. Also, per the regulations, 5 more parking spaces (for a total of 8) will be provided with conduit provisions for Level One EV Charging that can be installed in the future if deemed necessary. Of the additional 5 spaces, one will be provided in a handicap-accessible restricted space.

Beyond hardscape improvements, softscape enhancements are proposed to serve residents and maintain zoning compliance. A 25' wide buffer has been added on all side and rear property lines to provide screening for the abutting residential uses. This buffer will be appropriately planted with a combination of evergreen and deciduous trees and shrubs, except within the existing woods along the far-east rear line which is free from any proposed activities. Other landscape plantings and 12' tall LED light poles are proposed around the site to increase shade, seasonal-interest, and safety on site. As previously mentioned, the open lawn in the front of the building will be preserved in its current state, but the applicant and design team strongly feel that an outdoor gathering space is a priority for the residents. Accordingly, just under 18,000 SF of wooded area to the rear of the building will be removed and resurfaced as lawn for flexible, passive recreation, gathering, and other activities. The placement of this open area to the back of the site will limit any noise impacts to the neighboring properties.

Due to the increase in impervious surface and land cover changes for the proposed site improvements, the existing stormwater management system is being supplemented to treat and infiltrate additional stormwater runoff. One new drywell is being utilized in addition to the two existing drywell structures. Any overflow from these structures will enter one of three planted depressions or basins where water infiltration and water quality treatment will occur. Two large basins are located to the rear of the building with leakoffs from the pavement and the third small depression is being proposed near the northwest building corner. The introduction of these stormwater management practices eliminated the need to direct stormwater to the stream along the far-eastern property line, thus eliminating the opportunity for any wetland or upland review area disturbance.

### **Special Exception Criteria**

Per the South Windsor Zoning Regulations, the proposed land use is subject to the Special Exception Review Criteria outlined in Section 8.4 B of the Zoning Regulations. We believe the proposed Elderly Housing use meets the review criteria, namely:

- 1. The proposal is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Plan of Conservation and Development.*** The POCD has a top priority of preserving the character of Main Street as a strong reminder of the Town's heritage. The applicant and this project have no intention of altering the character of the neighborhood or street. This is being accomplished by maintaining the entire open front lawn of the site, approximately 275' of well-preserved space off the edge of pavement, as well as the plantings and building façade that face the road. The new on-site development will largely be to the sides and rear of the existing building, which will make any changes minimally apparent or visible from Main Street

itself. Additionally, there is a sidewalk connection bringing residents to the existing bus stop at the driveway entrance, but there is no sidewalk proposed along the street frontage to preserve the corridor's character without sidewalks. Meetings with neighboring property owners have taken place with the design and entitlements team and they strongly support the design decision to omit street frontage sidewalks from the application. The POCD also recommends preserving natural resources and this project does not propose any disturbance to the wetlands, upland review area, or stream in the rear of the site. A large majority of the existing wooded area will be protected as well.

2. ***The application has met the requirements of the zoning regulations.*** The application meets the requirements of the regulations for Elderly Housing in a single-family residential zone (A-40) as a Special Exception.
3. ***The land is physically suited to the proposed use.*** The land is suited for the proposed elderly housing use on site as the previous uses were similar in nature and served similar demographics. The new use as rental housing will provide more stability on a currently vacant site, and the existing land and infrastructure will be enhanced to suit residents and their visitors year-round in a safe manner. This property is currently served by public water, sewer, and electric services; all heating and air conditioning will be provided through heat pump and outdoor condenser units so public natural gas connections are not required.
4. ***Minimal, if any, adverse environmental impacts are created.*** This development will have minimal environmental impact as demonstrated by the submitted plans and reports. No disturbance is proposed in the regulated areas on site, including the wetlands, associated 80' upland review area, and portion of Newberry Brook that parallels the rear property line.
5. ***No traffic or other hazards will be created.*** A traffic statement is provided as a part of this application to discuss existing and proposed traffic patterns. To summarize the findings in the provided statement, the proposed housing use generates minimal traffic. As compared to the previous nursing home use, there is a slight morning increase of 4 additional trips/hour, but the site sees a decrease of 9 trips/hour in the afternoon (based on Institute of Transportation Engineers' data). No major traffic hazard or safety concerns are expected because of the new use at this development. The facility will also utilize the existing curb cut and access driveway on Main Street.
6. ***The impacts on the capacity of the present and proposed utilities, street, drainage systems, sidewalks, and other elements of the infrastructure will be minimal.*** The existing building renovation will utilize current public water and sewer connections available along the property frontage in Main Street. Existing communications and electrical services will also be utilized to provide heating and cooling as previously discussed. Sidewalks on site will be preserved where existing ADA-compliant routes are present and will be supplemented by new fully accessible sidewalks around the entire building and parking areas. Existing and proposed drywell structures, in conjunction with planted infiltration basins, will collect and treat stormwater runoff and discharge at or below peak volumes for the evaluated storm events.
7. ***There will be minimal or no adverse effects on existing uses in the area.*** The site is surrounded by single family residential and agricultural uses which will be minimally impacted by the adaptive reuse nature of this project. Where new development is proposed on site, appropriate and sufficient screening methods are proposed to reduce sightlines on and off the property without completely blocking views to surrounding natural and passive-recreational amenities. Great care has also been taken by the applicant to work with abutting property owners to reduce impacts to the existing uses and provide safe property

line relationships between generational property owners and the future residents and their visitors.

8. ***Surrounding property values will be conserved.*** It is expected that existing property values will not be adversely impacted given the compatible use and improvements that are proposed on this currently vacant, underutilized site.
9. ***The character of the neighborhood will be maintained or minimally disrupted.*** As discussed in Special Exception Criteria #1, the primarily interior building renovations and exterior circulation improvements will be minimally disruptive to the neighborhood. Roughly 350' of the site off Main Street's edge of pavement will remain in existing conditions with the exception of one proposed east-to-west running sidewalk and new supplemental landscape plantings and new residential-scale site lighting. There is also an effort being made to preserve vegetation along abutting properties and to the rear of the existing building, and the inclusion of additional evergreen and deciduous plantings and fencing in and around the 25' buffer along all side and rear property lines.
10. ***The general welfare of the community will be served.*** The general welfare of the community will be served through the development and improvements to the site's current vacant state. There is a growing demand in Town for elderly housing and this development will help to serve that need, and therefore serve the general welfare of a growing South Windsor demographic. The private ownership of the site will also benefit the community economically: Town real property taxes will add to the South Windsor Grand List along with added motor vehicle taxes for new South Windsor residents.
11. ***There is a balance between neighborhood acceptance and community needs.*** This lot previously served elderly nursing home and healthcare center tenants, and the proposed privately-owned housing use will return economic growth to this vacant site and provide visual and environmental enhancements to the property. There currently are three single-family residential properties directly abutting the subject site, and three directly across Main Street that will not be impacted by the proposed site improvements and adaptive reuse. The proposed site improvements will be largely located to the rear of the existing building away from the residential developments. Any work on the sides of the building closest to the residential neighbors will be thoroughly screened from view as discussed directly with these neighbors. Accordingly, the neighborhood acceptance has been balanced with community needs.
12. ***Historic factors are adequately protected; or due consideration to preservation of historic factors has been demonstrated.*** There are no known historic factors that will be impacted on the site. Much of the existing building façade will be preserved and amended where degraded to protect the current character of Main Street.
13. ***The overall physical appearance of the proposed development is compatible with surrounding development and the Commission's goals for the neighborhood/corridor.*** The overall appearance of the existing building will be preserved, as previously discussed, and any new improvements will be minimally noticeable from Main Street or by abutting property owners. The proposed passive atmosphere of the site will be compatible with surrounding uses, including site-appropriate landscaping and dark-sky compliant, full cutoff lighting that will not exceed 12' in height.
14. ***The architectural design is aesthetically pleasing and blends well into the surrounding area.*** The attractive character of the existing building will be preserved, and site improvements are proposed at an appropriate scale to match and supplement existing conditions.

As such, we believe the elderly housing site plan modification proposal is appropriate for this property and will meet a growing housing demand in the Town of South Windsor.

We look forward to reviewing this application with Town Staff and the Commission and are available should you have any questions or comments.

Sincerely,  
Design Professionals, Inc.



Peter DeMallie  
President